

MISTRUST PLAGUES ALLIED ESPIONAGE

Soviet Infiltration Causing Suspicion Among Services

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PARIS, July 20—A mutual loss of confidence in the integrity of various Western intelligence services appears to be the principal result in the North Atlantic alliance of recent disclosures of Soviet infiltration of these services.

This continues, it is understood, despite the drastic shake-ups of West German and British intelligence operations in East Germany, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's most sensitive area from an intelligence standpoint.

This shake-up was necessitated first, by the discovery that George Blake, an important British agent, had been working for the Soviet Union and, second, by disclosures at the trial in Karlsruhe of the manner in which West Germany's Federal Intelligence Agency had been penetrated by double agents.

Blake and three Germans — Hans Clemens, Heinz Felfe and Erwin Tiebel—passed much secret military information to the Soviet Union. But they probably did more damage to various Western intelligence services in Eastern Europe by divulging the identity and methods of agents.

Always a Possibility

The possibility that NATO's formal military organization is vulnerable to espionage has always been considered. The size and complexity of modern military establishments and the tendency of units to advertise their identity simplifies the job of the Soviet agent attempting to determine the disposition of allied forces.

The Russians know almost all they wish to know about the identity and armament of alliance units in Western Europe. NATO, in turn, can provide an accurate rundown of Soviet forces in East Germany, including their state of training, armament and morale.

The information appears to be just as exact in the case of forces of Soviet-bloc states in Central and Eastern Europe.

There is a firm conviction, however, that the Soviet Union has not penetrated the treaty organization's battle plans. These have to do with how the alliance's military forces would react to certain situations arising from a Soviet attack in Europe.

This reaction would involve not only the forces now in position but also deployment of the forces of the United States, British and French armies, which form the alliance's strategic reserve.

More importantly, it also would include the schedule for use of tactical and strategic nuclear weapons in certain situations.

Col. Stig Wennerstrom, the Swedish spy, knew a good deal about arrangements for defending the alliance's northern flank in Norway. But qualified sources have said they doubt whether Colonel Wennerstrom had penetrated secret plans concerning the West's ultimate reaction to any Soviet attack in that sector.

General confidence on this score does not, however, compensate the alliance for the present

distrust among the allied intelligence services. This distrust apparently has reduced cooperation among them on the ground that no one can say who is "safe" and who is not.

Some nations have as many as five individual intelligence services operating in Europe, one for each of three fighting services, one for the foreign ministry and one independent service, like Germany's Federal Intelligence Agency.

Whatever results the services may produce, it is clear that, in the present atmosphere of distrust, there is tremendous amount of duplication.

At the moment the loss of confidence appears to weigh most heavily on the West Germans, even though double agents from their federal organization were arrested as long ago as 1961. The German agency, headed by Reinhard Gehlen, the former Wehrmacht general, long had been considered to be the safest of all.

C. I. A. Helped Form It

This agency was organized in 1947 with the cooperation of the United States Central Intelligence Agency. Some Washington officials considered that because General Gehlen and his lieutenants had fought the Russians, they should know more about them than anyone else.

There was a counterargument, but it was discounted. It held that many former Nazi intelligence agents might use their experience to slip into General Gehlen's group and that their past and affinity among totalitarians made them easy marks for recruitment by the Russians.

Many C.I.A. officials considered the British "too dilettante" and the French "too sloppy." The German agency enjoyed the Americans' confidence and probably was closer to C.I.A. than any of the others.

It is now known that three German double agents kept a stream of intelligence documents, tape recordings, photographs and reports moving eastward. What has not been divulged is the amount of false Soviet information they passed on to the Gehlen organization and how much of this was transmitted to the United States.

As the experience of World War II demonstrates, the planting of false information often is as important in espionage as the assembling of true intelligence. No one in authority could say how much false information was planted, but the assumption is that it was considerable.